

Anti-Slavery Office,

New York, 3 March, 1859.

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Dear Garrison,

I wish, in the strictest confidence, to ask your advice in a matter respecting which I have some hesitancy in coming to a decision.

For some time past I have had serious thoughts of asking the Executive Committee to increase my salary. It has required a strict economy, during ^(almost) the six years that I have been connected with the Standard, to meet our necessary expenses; and indeed we could not have done it, if we had not sacrificed our tastes, and, to some extent, ~~used~~ the ordinary means of comfort, to obtain cheap board, often in houses where we were almost ashamed to ask a friend to call upon us. For two years we

lived in a fourth-rate boarding house, and in an attic, that we might have the means whereby to live, while rendering needed assistance to those who, from their relationship, had claims upon us. Living in New York is more expensive than in any other city of the country, and the prices have been going steadily up ever since we came here, till now \$1,000 hardly goes farther than \$800 would, ^{have done} six years ago. Last fall we were compelled to move, and thereby to increase considerably ~~our~~ the price of living. In consequence of this we are somewhat pinched to meet ordinary expenses; but, what is a more serious matter, I am suffering for lack of skilful dentistry, for which I have not the means to pay. When Mary Anne was able to lecture, we did better; but she has been too weak to do much in this way for nearly three years past. My salary, compared with those

of other persons here in similar employment, is very small. For example, my friend Tilton, who fills quite a subordinate post in the Independent, and one which does not involve half my labor and responsibility, is paid \$1,500; and then he has many opportunities, by extra work, to earn considerable more. The ordinary reporters on the daily papers here are paid more than I am, and so much of their time is at command for other labors, that they earn, often, \$500 extra in a single year. I mention this not as a matter of invidious, still less of envious, comparison; but as a proof that, if I were to ask a small increase of compensation, I should make no unreasonable demand.

I hope I do not overrate the value and importance of my services to the Society. Those who know me most intimately will not, I think, charge me with too great self-esteem, or with a disposition to weigh any selfish interest against the

the claims of the cause. Certainly, I serve the Society with diligence and fidelity; though, unfortunately, much of my labor is of a sort that makes no show and can be put in no inventory. Those who are acquainted with my daily habits will testify that I am a hard-working, pains-taking editor, and that I devote myself to my occupation more exclusively than most men in similar places. The fact is, I exhaust my whole power in my editorial and other duties, inasmuch that I am in danger of breaking down. Since Mr. Gay left my labors, especially in the way of correspondence and in waiting upon those who call at the office for one purpose or another, have been much increased, so that I can hardly go out of town for a Sunday without inconvenience. Those who see nothing of what I do save what shows in the columns of the Standard, have little idea of the work I do.

In ~~for~~ this matter, dear Garrison, I speak to you as ^{to} my second self. I ~~would~~ know the difficulty of raising money for

our treasury, and the need there is of making every dollar go as far as possible; and if you, upon consideration of all the circumstances, think I had better struggle on and do the best I can with my present salary, I will cheerfully follow your advice. If, on the other hand, you think the Ex. Com. would recognize the justice of an application on my part for an increase of my stipend, and would be likely to vote it freely and cheerfully, I will take your advice as to the best way to bring the subject to their notice.

I repeat the request that you will consider this letter and its subject, for the present, strictly confidential.

Mary Anne writes with me in warm remembrances to Helen and yourself, and the children.

Yours, unfalteringly,

Oliver Johnson

My dear Sir,
I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th inst. in relation to the matter of the
of the said land. I am sorry to hear that you are
I will be glad to hear from you again.
I am, Sir, very respectfully,
Your obedient servant,
J. M. Smith

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